

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A suture anchor system, comprising:
a first suture anchor having at least ~~one~~ a first length of suture attached thereto; ~~and~~
a second suture anchor having at least ~~one~~ a second, separate length of suture attached thereto;
and
a third, separate suture coupled to the first and second sutures;
wherein ~~each~~ the first and second length of sutures ~~is~~ are coupled to one another by the third suture such that a distance between the first and second suture anchors with respect to each other is selectively adjustable.
2. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 1, further comprising at least one slip knot formed on at least one of the first and second sutures lengths, the slip knot being adapted to maintain the first and second suture anchors in a fixed position with respect to one another.
3. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 1, wherein the ~~first suture anchor includes a first suture length attached thereto, and the second suture anchor includes a second suture length attached thereto, and wherein the first and second sutures lengths~~ are slidably connected to one another.
4. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 3, wherein the first and second sutures lengths are slidably connected to one another by ~~a~~ the third suture ~~length extending therebetween.~~
5. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 4, further comprising at least one slip knot formed on at least one of the first, second, and third sutures lengths, the slip knot being adapted to maintain the first and second suture anchors in a fixed position with respect to one another.
6. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 4, wherein the first, second, and third sutures lengths each include a suture loop formed thereon, the suture loop on the first suture length being attached to the first suture anchor, and the suture loop on the second suture length being attached to the second suture anchor, and wherein the suture loop on the third suture length is connected to the suture loop on each of the first and second sutures lengths.

7. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 6, wherein at least one of the suture loops on the first, second, and third sutures includes a slip knot that enables adjustment of a size of the suture loop.

8. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 6, wherein the suture loop on each of the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ includes a slip knot formed thereon that enables adjustment of a size of the suture loop, and wherein the third suture ~~length~~ comprises a suture loop having opposed terminal ends that are fixedly mated to one another.

9. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 6, wherein the suture loop on each of the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ is formed from opposed terminal ends of the suture ~~length~~ being fixedly connected to one another, and wherein the suture loop on the third suture ~~length~~ includes a slip knot formed thereon that enables adjustment of a size of the suture loop.

10. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 3, wherein the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ are connected to one another by a slip knot formed on one of the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~.

11. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 10, wherein the first suture ~~length~~ includes first and second opposed terminal ends, the second terminal end being connected to the first suture anchor, and wherein the second suture ~~length~~ includes first and second terminal ends, the first terminal end being connected to a portion of the first suture ~~length~~ by a slip knot that allows the first terminal end of the second suture ~~length~~ to slidably move along the first suture ~~length~~, and the second terminal end of the second suture ~~length~~ being connected to the second suture anchor.

12. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 3, wherein the first suture ~~length~~ includes a suture loop formed thereon and coupled to a suture loop formed on the second suture ~~length~~, the first suture loop being coupled to the first suture, and the second suture loop being coupled to the second suture anchor.

13. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 12, wherein the suture loop on each of the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ includes a slip knot formed thereon to allow a size of each suture loop to be adjusted.

14. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 12, wherein the suture loop on the first suture ~~length~~ includes a slip knot formed thereon to allow a size of the suture loop to be adjusted, and wherein the suture loop on the second suture ~~length~~ has a fixed size.

15. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 14, wherein the suture loop on the second suture ~~length~~ is formed from opposed terminal ends of the suture ~~length~~ being fixedly attached to one another.

16. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 1, wherein each suture anchor is slidably disposed on the suture ~~length~~.

17. (Currently Amended) The suture anchor system of claim 1, wherein each suture anchor is fixedly disposed on the suture ~~length~~.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for anchoring tissue, comprising:
inserting a first anchor member having a first suture ~~length~~ attached thereto through tissue to be repaired and into an anchoring tissue;
inserting a second anchor member having a second, separate suture ~~length~~ attached thereto through the tissue to be repaired and into the anchoring tissue at a position spaced apart from the first anchor member by a selected distance, the second suture ~~length~~ on the second anchor member being adjustably coupled to the first suture ~~length~~ on the first anchor member by a third, separate suture; and
tensioning at least one of the first, and second, and third sutures ~~lengths~~ to anchor the tissue to be repaired to the anchoring tissue.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising at least one slip knot formed on at least one of the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~, the slip knot being adapted to maintain the first and second suture anchors in a fixed position with respect to one another.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18, wherein at least one of the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ is tensioned by pulling on a terminal end of the suture.

21. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the tissue to be repaired is the meniscus of the knee.

22. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the first and second anchor members are inserted through the tissue to be repaired and into the anchoring tissue arthroscopically.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18, wherein the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ are slidably connected to one another.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ are slidably connected to one another by a the third suture ~~length~~-extending therebetween.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24, further comprising at least one slip knot formed on at least one of the first, second, and third sutures ~~lengths~~, the slip knot being adapted to maintain the first and second suture anchors in a fixed position with respect to one another.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24, wherein the first, second, and third sutures ~~lengths~~ each include a suture loop formed thereon, the suture loop on the first suture ~~length~~ being attached to the first suture anchor, and the suture loop on the second suture ~~length~~ being attached to the second suture anchor, and wherein the suture loop on the third suture ~~length~~ is connected to the suture loop on each of the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein at least one of the suture loops includes a slip knot, and wherein the step of tensioning comprises pulling a terminal end of the at least one suture loop that includes the slip knot to adjust the size of the at least one suture loop.

28. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein the suture loop on each of the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ includes a slip knot formed thereon, and the third suture ~~length~~ comprises a suture loop having opposed terminal ends that are fixedly mated to one another, and wherein the step of tensioning comprises pulling a terminal end of each of the first and second sutures loops to adjust the size each suture loop.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein the suture loop on each of the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ is formed from opposed terminal ends of the suture ~~length~~ being fixedly connected to one another, and the suture loop on the third suture ~~length~~ includes a slip knot formed thereon that enables adjustment of a size of the suture loop, and wherein the step of tensioning comprises pulling a terminal end of the third suture loop to adjust the size of the third suture loop.

30. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18, wherein the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ are connected to one another by a slip knot formed on one of the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 30, wherein the first suture ~~length~~ includes first and second opposed terminal ends, the second terminal end being connected to the first suture anchor, and wherein the second suture ~~length~~ includes first and second terminal ends, the first terminal end being connected to a portion of the first suture ~~length~~ by a slip knot that allows the first terminal end of the second suture ~~length~~ to slidably move along the first suture ~~length~~, and the second terminal end of the second suture ~~length~~ being connected to the second suture anchor.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18, wherein the first suture ~~length~~ includes a suture loop formed thereon and coupled to a suture loop formed on the second suture ~~length~~, the first suture loop being coupled to the first suture, and the second suture loop being coupled to the second suture anchor.

33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32, wherein the suture loop on each of the first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ includes a slip knot formed thereon to allow a size of each suture loop to be adjusted, and wherein the step of tensioning comprises pulling a terminal end of at least one first and second sutures ~~lengths~~ to adjust the size of at least one of the first and second suture loops.

34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 32, wherein the suture loop on the first suture ~~length~~ includes a slip knot formed thereon to allow a size of the suture loop to be adjusted, and the suture loop on the second suture ~~length~~ has a fixed size, and wherein the step of tensioning comprises pulling a terminal end of the first suture ~~length~~ to adjust the size of the first suture loop.

35. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 34, wherein the suture loop on the second suture ~~length~~ is formed from opposed terminal ends of the suture ~~length~~ being fixedly attached to one another.

36. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18, wherein ~~each~~ the first suture anchor is slidably disposed on the first suture length and the second suture anchor is slidably disposed on the second suture.

37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18, wherein ~~each~~ the first suture anchor is fixedly disposed on the first suture length and the second suture anchor is fixedly disposed on the second suture.